Equal Rights

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ABIGAIL MEJÍA DE FERNÁNDEZ

Information on the legal status of the women of the Dominican Republic which was incorporated in a report submitted by the Inter American Commission of Women to the Seventh International Conference of American States in Montevideo, was furnished by a sub-committee of the Commission, of which Professor Abigail Mejía de Fernández was chairman. Professor de Fernández is a member of the faculty of the Normal School of Santo Domingo and a leading spirit in the movement to secure Equal Rights for the women of her country. She is a director of the Acción Feminista Dominicana, founder and president of the Club Nosotras, and the author of several books.

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Annual Dues	**$10.00**
Associate Members	**$1.00**
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OBJECT OF THE WOMAN'S PARTY

The object of this organization shall be to secure for women complete equality with men under the law and in all human relationships.

THE LUCRETIA MOTT AMENDMENT

"Men and women shall have Equal Rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction."

"Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."

[Senate Joint Resolution Number 1]
[House Joint Resolution Number 1]

Introduced in the Senate March 10, 1933, by SENATOR JOHN G. TOWNSEND, Delaware.

Introduced in the House March 9, 1933, by REPRESENTATIVE LOUIS LUDLOW, Indiana.

We Pass Another Milestone

JOURNEYS are measured by milestones, lives by birthdays. In a sense, however, each new day is a rebirth, a chance to begin life afresh.

That is the way we should regard the Regional Conference of the Middle Atlantic States held last Saturday and Sunday at Harrisburg. A conference is a meeting for counsel and discussion. The best way to solve a problem or difficulty is to bring it out in the open, look at it from all sides, discuss it pro and con, and inside and out, and then give battle to solve or remove it.

We are all temperamentally and mentally different. While we do not differ as to the rightness and greatness of our cause, not every member of the Party has the patience or the time to probe deeply into the reasons for the discriminations existing against us, as a result of which we are rated in the law as less than human beings. But in order to fight and overcome an enemy, which may be an armed host, or a militant prejudice, we must get all the facts that will reveal the nature of our opponents and the vulnerable spots in their armor.

There was much we learned from our leaders at the Conference about the common law and how it has cramped women not only in the acquiring of material things, but also in the cultivation of that consciousness of personal worth, nationality, and citizenship which in ancient times made it such a proud thing to be a Roman. There was much we learned of the forces that are closing in on women like a ring of steel to deprive them even of the gains they have by hard striving already won. Our hearts contracted at the thought that the college girl of the immediate future—unless we mass all our strength to prevent it—may find more doors of opportunity closed to her even than did her mother.

We are grateful to our Chairman, Sarah T. Colvin, for suggesting these Regional Conferences, so that we may re-orient ourselves again and again, and re-inspire each other by mutually taking counsel together, and in so doing bring more and more women under our banners, eager and willing to fight until justice shall in very truth be synonymous with equality.

Amusing Interlude

EVERY college sophomore who dips into the history of the Middle Ages has enjoyed a few chuckles in reading about the mental gyrations of the scholastics, or schoolmen, of that period. These learned and altogether estimable gentlemen felt that gray matter should not be wasted on earthly and mundane problems like ameliorating the condition of serfs and galley slaves. It was much more important, it seems, to determine how many angels could stand on the point of a needle than to consider ways to elevate the masses who groaned under the lash of the classes.

Some progress has been made since that period. Galileo stood his ground against the quibblers and fictionists. Columbus refused to budge from his thesis, based on scientific observations, that the earth was round. Even in this enlightened land, it was not until 1870 that the fiction that dark-skinned human beings were chattels, or things, rather than human flesh and sinew was overthrown, and it took a bloody war to do it.

The common law, as practically everyone knows, abounds in fictions, presumptions, and quibbles, hoary with age, deep-grained, difficult to eradicate. Scientists are ever on the alert for facts—for the truth. A microbe is a microbe, whether male or female. But for ages, in the law, the fictions have been upheld, and are still upheld today in many jurisdictions—that husbands and wife in contemplation of law are one, that a wife is not responsible for a crime which she commits in the presence of her husband, because she is presumably acting under his coercion; that women are not persons in the light of the common law, and, until recently, the old rule that wives are not competent witnesses for their husbands in criminal cases. The last mentioned was abrogated less than a month ago by a decision of the Supreme Court. The last refuges of mediaeval scholasticism are the bench and bar.

History is often a dry subject. It is tragic to view the struggle, lasting through many centuries, of women toward the light, especially when one considers the immense stores of energy, time and money that are used up to bring about changes that are affected with pitiful slowness. Nevertheless, we can't help thinking of the sophomores of the future. How amused and diverted they will be on looking back at our era by the picture of bespectacled and begowned jurists solemnly arguing that women are not persons.

Middle Atlantic Region Organizes at Harrisburg

IF freedom to speak out in meeting is a fundamental of democracy, the Woman's Party at the Regional Conference of Middle Atlantic States, held last Saturday and Sunday at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, confirmed its reputation for being one of the most democratic organizations in the world. At the same time discussion resolved itself into action. At the close of the sessions, by-laws were adopted, formally organizing what will henceforth be known as the Middle Atlantic Region of the National Woman's Party.

Those attending the Conference came from the five States of Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York. Sara B. Cummings, educator and Chairman of the Philadelphia Branch, was Chairman of Arrangements, and the sessions were held in the Penn-Harris Hotel in the Pennsylvania capital, in the shadow of the State House within whose walls recently a measure was defeated which would have thrown thousands of Pennsylvania women out of work. Due to the alertness and activity of the Pennsylvania members of the Woman's Party this bill, which forbade the employment of women as waitresses in restaurants where liquor is served, went down to that limbo to which all measures that discriminate against women deserve to be consigned.

The holding of Regional Conferences was the proposal of Sarah T. Colvin, the new National Chairman of the Party, who feels that such gatherings, held at intervals during the year at scattered points and comprising different groups of contiguous States, can be advantageously used to carry out her great ambition to increase the Party membership to 200,000 and beyond. Ways and means for re-organizing the Party so as to bring about this desired end, in that way making its activities in all lines, and particularly in its Congressional work, more effective, were the underlying theme of all the sessions. As one Party leader pithily expressed it, the aim is to make 'ballots' as effective as 'bullets' in the war against laws that discriminate against women.

PRELIMINARY to the opening session Saturday morning, was a round-table on parliamentary procedure, conducted by Gail Laughlin whose experience as a member of the Maine Legislature especially qualified her to present the subject with a clearness and unambiguity in harmony with her contention that parliamentary law was nothing more nor less than "common sense and a square deal." Rules of procedure were necessary, she explained, so that the business of meetings could be conducted "on a basis that gives everybody an equal opportunity and place."

Mayor George Hoverder of Harrisburg officially welcomed the Conference, congratulating the members present on the kind of work they were doing. "It is a wonderful thing," he said, "to get women interested in things pertaining to the community." He singled out for special praise Elizabeth S. Baker, educator and Woman's Party leader of Harrisburg, and others who are "endeavoring with her to make Harrisburg the finest capital of the United States." At the conclusion of his speech, at the suggestion of Miss Laughlin, the Mayor was given a rising vote of thanks.

FLORENCE BAYARD HILLES of Delaware, former National Chairman, then introduced Sarah Tarleton Colvin, of Minnesota, the present Chairman.

"Some eighteen years ago," Mrs. Hilles said, "the 'Suffrage Special' went out to the Coast asking the co-operation of the women of the West. Among those who were on that train was Sarah Tarleton Colvin, our present National Chairman. It is always good to confer with one another, but especially good to confer with our own officers. I cannot tell you how much her presence here today means to me. It is with the greatest pleasure and the greatest confidence that I introduce Sarah Tarleton Colvin."

Mrs. Colvin graciously reminded Mrs. Hilles that she had crossed the continent not once but twice with her in efforts better the condition of women, the other occasion being when they traveled on the "Prison Special," following the picketing in Washington, and ending up with the launching of the National Woman's Party in Chicago. Since then her own personal affairs, Mrs. Colvin explained, had kept her somewhat inactive as a feminist until the N. R. A., through protective legislation, began definitely to "write women down." As one discrimination after another was written into the codes, Mrs. Colvin said, she realized that only through the National Woman's Party, a "freely-moving, free-thinking group of women" could these economic injustices be wiped out. At the same time, it came home to her that even the Woman's Party would have to gain large increases in membership before effective resistance could be offered to those who were trying step by step to deprive American women of the right to earn a living.

The National Association of Nurses, she said, boasts a membership of between 150,000 and 175,000 and maintains a large office in New York on modest membership dues. In the case of the National Woman's Party, this plan should be all the more feasible, she said, inasmuch as the Party has tis own national headquarters in Washington and need not depend on dues of its members to maintain them.

The Regional plan of organization, Mrs. Colvin explained, had been successfully tried out in the Middle West where five States, including Minnesota, had by group action successfully put over a progressive program. "The dominant strains in my part of the country," she pursued, "are Scandinavian and German, yet we have become *one* people and have written upon our statute books laws that are quite advanced. We have done away almost entirely with the common law which is so unfair to women and have substituted statute law. Among other gains, we now have jury service for women and the equal guardianship of children. We shall now try to organize these States for the National Woman's Party, but our first aim must be to get members.

Edith Houghton Hooker, Chairman of the Maryland Branch, proposed that the matter of framing a proper set-up for the proposed Regional organizations and Conferences be considered. As a first step, Marguerite Dugan Bodziak, an assistant prosecuting attorney of Wilmington, Delaware, was chosen temporary chairman for the Region, and Florence Elizabeth Kennard, of Baltimore, Corresponding Secretary of the Maryland Branch of the Party, was selected as temporary Recording Secretary. On motion, also by Mrs. Hooker, it was decided to organize as a Region and that every member of the Party who was also a resident of the Region should be considered a member of the Regional organization and permitted to vote. Moved by Miss Laughlin and carried, that the chair appoint a committee to draft by-laws.

DURING the discussion provoked by these various proposals, the hope was expressed by Miss Laughlin and others that there would not be "too much machinery in the plan of organization." Mrs. Colvin warned against becoming involved in "reform movements," saying that the Woman's Party had one clear-cut aim and purpose — the securing of Equal Rights. She also said she hoped the Regional plan would not weaken the tie-up between the States and the National Headquarters. Miss Laughlin, on the other hand, felt that it was not necessary that all Party activities should be concentrated in Washington. That might have been advantageous in the early days of the Woman's Party—now she felt that it was advisable for the States to confer among themselves over problems that particularly concerned their own regional groups. Vee Teryss Perlman of New York, author and publicist, said she saw no reason for conflict between the Regional group idea and the

former set-up, consisting of State and National organizations. The relationship between the State Branches and the National Headquarters would remain as before and, in addition to the annual National Convention of the Party, to which all State branches send their representatives, members of Regional groups composed of adjacent States could meet several times a year for interchanges of views concerning problems affecting only their own immediate localities.

Workers Are Needed in Congressional Campaign

NATIONAL Headquarters has always been a hive of industry, but never more so than in the past few months, according to Anita Pollitzer, National Congressional Secretary, who told the Harrisburg Conference of the intensive and aggressive campaigns that are constantly being waged in many directions from Washington to prevent the passage by the present Congress of legislation discriminating against women, and in behalf of the passage of the Equal Nationality and Equal Rights bills. This, Miss Pollitzer said, required not only unremitting application and alertness, but agility in switching one's support from one measure to another. Recently, she explained, while every effort of the Congressional Committee was bent on securing the ratification of the Nationality Treaty signed at Montevideo, it was discovered that a tremendous effort was being made to assure that "not one penny of the Appropriations Act should be given to a husband or wife if the other spouse should also be in the government service." This, she pointed out, was a much more drastic matter than Section 213 of the Economy Act which gave heads of departments power to dismiss a husband or wife whose marital partner was also a government employee.

LITERALLY, Miss Pollitzer said, this kind of thing was always happening in Washington and, if the members of the Congressional Committee had been nicknamed "watch-dogs of the Capitol," there was ample reason for it. At any rate, she had been told by members of the American Federation of Labor that the unjust provision referred to would certainly have been voted out, had it not been for the persistent lobbying of twelve Government workers on her committee. If it had been voted out, this Act, Miss Pollitzer said, would probably have been the first step in the bringing about of a situation resembling that in Germany.

In order that the Congressional Committee may do its work most effectively, Miss Pollitzer said, there should be a member on it from every State, each State member in turn to enlist the aid of other women whose job it would be to line up the constituents of each member of Congress in support of equality measures. In that way every Senator and Representative would be approached: First, to support the Equal Rights Amendment; secondly, to oppose the United States going into a World Court, unless the Code of Laws to be adopted contained no discriminations based on sex; thirdly, to oppose legislation that handicaps married women; and fourthly, to give his support to the Copeland-Dickstein Nationality Bill. This four-point program is to be carried on in addition to the canvass that is being made by the Committee to secure the ratification by the Senate of the Equal Nationality Treaty adopted at Montevideo. In fact, Miss Pollitzer declared that the securing of the ratification of this treaty is her Committee's most *immediate* problem. The effects of the recent victories at Montevideo, she said, were really "colossal." The signing of the treaty meant the launching of a superb new method for inaugurating world-wide justice for women, instead of the slow point by point method hitherto employed by women within their own national boundaries. She implored every member of the Party to write her Senator at once, saying that she relied on him to support ratification. Influential organizations and individuals who were not members of the Party, men and women, should also be urged to write letters, Miss Pollitzer said.

Mrs. Hooker added her voice to that of Miss Pollitzer in urging that members write letters immediately, and, in addition, that Equal Rights petitions, to be later presented to Congress, be drawn up and signatures obtained without delay. By the time a second Regional Conference were held, possibly in April at Atlantic City, Mrs. Hooker said, as many as 25,000 names might be secured. It was also proposed that postcards, typed with messages urging Congressional action, be distributed by members among such of their friends and acquaintances who might not be willing to go to the trouble of writing letters. Vee Teryss Perlman of New York suggested in place of petitions and postcards that members of the Party circulate printed blanks with spaces for signatures, as had been done by Mrs. Sabin of the Anti-Prohibition Association.

LOIS BUENZLI, Pennsylvania member of the Congressional Committee, who followed Miss Pollitzer, gave an account of the work of her Committee in Pennsylvania. Recent activities of her group, she said, had made her see new significance in an old jingle, which she had paraphrased as follows:

"Little drops of water,
Little grains of sand—
Make a mighty commotion
In a Congressman's stand."

After the morning business session, a "feast of reason" was combined with an excellent luncheon at which Elizabeth S. Baker of Harrisburg presided as toastmistress, and Florence Bayard Hilles, former National Chairman of the Woman's Party, told a number of anecdotes involving discriminations against women, showing to what ridiculous lengths the proponents of protective legislation for women will allow themselves to go. The State of Ohio, she said, is the worst offender in this regard.

"Among the silliest of these discriminatory laws," Mrs. Hilles continued, "are those in effect in some States which regulate weights which a working women may lift, varying from 15 to 45 pounds in the various States. Now all married women who have families lift daily, many times, weights from 18 to 25 pounds, and no woman has yet been injured by carrying her own children. There are no regulations as to the weight of children that women may carry.

"MANY States have laws preventing women from becoming mining engineers. In Arizona, where there is such a law, the daughter of a mining engineer who wanted to become an engineer herself was dismayed when she learned that she could not engage in her profession in her own State. In Kansas, a woman mining engineer was compelled to get a special license to operate a hoisting machine in her husband's coal mine."

On a recent trip, Mrs. Hilles said, she was asked by the station agent whether she wished to take out an accident insurance policy. When she read the policy, she discovered that a man who was injured would be paid certain sums by the week or month, or, in case of death, the amount of the policy would be paid over to the beneficiary; whereas, in the case of a woman, the company would not be liable for one cent, unless she was killed outright.

Dr. Arabel Clark of Philadelphia, educator and leader in the Philadelphia Branch of the National Woman's Party, was the next speaker. Miss Clark made a vigorous defense of the classroom teacher, declaring that upon her rests the entire responsibility for the efficiency and success of present-day schools and teaching.

Saying that she came from a place where men teachers at one time were paid twice as much as women, and that discrimination against women educators today was being shown in attempts to oust

married women teachers from their jobs, Miss Clark deplored the fact that teachers are not allowed to teach what they should teach and want to teach.

"There is no such thing as intellectual honesty she declared, "in any educational system in the country. The time has come for a change and changes must come in education as well as in everything else. Today the biggest crime that can be committed is to tell the truth. There's always a group which is getting more money and having more influence who keep the truth about the schools from the public. If the public does not know the truth, it is the fault of the class-room teacher. I should not be surprised if in six months we did not have a complete turnover in our schools, not only in this city, but throughout the State."

* * * *

If there were a woman whose ability was recognized as being equal to that of a Washington or a Lincoln, what chance would she have of being elected to the Presidency?

Absolutely none, declared Gail Laughlin, member of the Maine Legislature. A woman may have greater ability than a man in her chosen work and profession, but that does not mean that the world will let her step ahead of him. This tendency to consign woman, no matter how proficient, always to second place in the game of life and the earning of a livelihood, Miss Laughlin said, has been handed down from the Middle Ages, having been hidden away for centuries in the common law of every State except Louisiana. Before the common law of England came into existence, Miss Laughlin declared, "the old cave-woman could hold her own against the cave man. The odds are even between a lion and a lioness. Kipling declared that the female is more deadly than the male. And the only kind of a bear you have to fear is the one you've wounded or the she-bear with cubs."

REFERRING to the increase in discriminations against women through the N. R. A. codes, Miss Laughlin said that fifty years ago someone had predicted that, if women were allowed to go to college, they would become "broken-down rakes." Protective legislation for women of the present day reflects this attitude, she said, but pointed out that there was one important difference. Protective legislation today is being invoked against women only because women are being paid for their work. If going to college had meant any financial reward for women, there would have been laws to protect the race by preventing women from going to college. "And, of course," the speaker added ironically, "if there had been any money involved, the A. F. of L. would have been the first to have suggested such laws."

"It is a known fact," she pursued, "that more men are color-blind than women. Should we therefore have a law that no man should drive an auto? Of course not. Such laws should be founded on conditions, as should all laws, not on a sex basis."

In her excoriation of provisions of the common law, under which women were held to be chattels, the Maine legislator paid her respects to Blackstone, who stated in his "Commentaries" that women had no rights under the common law, acceding to a husband even the right to beat his wife if he used a stick of "reasonable size," and blandly ending his remarks with the naive and child-like commentary that thus it was that "in the law the female is so great a favorite."

Earnestness and eloquence reached a climax in Miss Laughlin's closing remarks:

"There is a stirring on the face of the waters presaging the coming of a flood tide which will produce a new concept of women as human entities instead of as appendages of men—of entities endowed with certain qualities which they, and they alone, have the right to determine the use if. The day will come when the children of the children of the children of those who help to bring this about will be as proud of their inheritance as are those who say today, 'I come from one of those who stood at Runnymede.'"

Students Plan National Equal Rights Council

CAROLINE BECKER of Goucher College presided at the college session Saturday afternoon at the Harrisburg Conference, at which "The Growth of the Equal Rights Movement in Women's Colleges" was the topic of discussion.

Goucher College has a growing Student Council actively interested in Equal Rights, declared Mildred Katz, the first speaker, and president of the Goucher unit. She said that members of the Goucher Council had on several occasions spoken in favor of co-education in engineering schools and had lobbied for a woman jury service law in the Maryland legislature. Martha Thurlow, Goucher sophomore, said she had become interested in Equal Rights through hearing her college friends discuss it, also because she believed that the Woman's Party wanted women to have an equal chance with men to be educated, and because, when she finally got a job, she did not want anyone to discriminate against her. Evelyn Byrd Howell, founder and first president of the Goucher Council, said that a law which discriminated against women did not deserve to be called a law. She had always been an advocate of Equal Rights, she said, having been allowed to climb trees with her brother, whom she had also been able to fight—"and lick."

Among other facts brought to light at this session was that there is a law in force in Maryland requiring department stores to provide seats for saleswomen, and that the Goucher group, feeling that this is discriminatory legislation, is collecting information which is to be later used in an effort to change the law so that it will apply to men as well.

PLANS were discussed for organizing similar student councils at other colleges, including co-ed colleges, and then co-ordinating them into a National Student Council which would have direct representation with the State Branches at National Conventions of the Party. The need of an intensive Equal Rights movement in colleges, it was pointed out, had lately become more acute because of the economic crisis. The movement to keep women out of jobs applied to college as well as other women, leading to the postponement of desirable marriages, perhaps the breaking of engagements. Unless checked, the result would be that the college girl would be able to marry only if her fiancé were an economically independent man. It was urged that such a philosophy was dysgenic. It was a detriment to the race to have the college woman find herself upon graduation to be an "economic liability."

* * * *

Mrs. Harvey W. Wiley, National Vice-Chairman of the Woman's Party, came direct from Washington, where she had been attending a convention of the Federation of Women's Clubs, to preside at the dinner on the Saturday night program of the Harrisburg Conference. She brought with her a message from Lucretia Mott Blankenburg, veteran clubwoman, who had told her fellow-workers of the Federation that, in order to prosper, it was necessary to "avoid tradition, habit and old age,"—a sentiment, Mrs. Wiley added which she believed to be in perfect accord with the program and philosophy of the Woman's Party.

Caroline Becker of Goucher College, Baltimore, the first speaker, said that college women were constantly being told that they constituted an important part of the community. All the more, therefore, should it be their responsibility, Miss Becker maintained, to line up solidly behind the National Woman's Party which was doing a great work for the advancement of women.

"I am a resident of New York," explained Evelyn Byrd Howell, Goucher Senior, "and in my State there is a law forbidding women to work after 6 P. M. One of my major interests is biology. Suppose I go to New York to take up my work in a laboratory after I graduate. What will I do if the germs don't wake up until after six? Nor can I see how looking at microbes can have anything to do with my morals."

"It took a long time for the Woman's Party to make an impression with its insistence of Equal Rights," declared Sarah T. Colvin, National Chairman. In the depression women began to realize as never before that this was a matter of vital concern to them—that Equal Rights is a fundamental, basic principle in everything that we do. But we as a Party are not going to do much until we get behind us hosts of women. We must learn to feel that we are one great working group that can go back to the States and help to elect the men who supported us and to defeat the men who opposed us.

"Laws do not make realities," asserted Edith Houghton Hooker, State Chairman of the Maryland Branch. "Colored men have for years enjoyed the guarantees of the Fourteenth Amendment, and yet colored men are still being lynched. Through what has occurred at Montevideo we have victory immediately behind us, and, if we show the needed strength, courage and determination, we can soon have it before us. But, while our Equal Rights Amendment will probably go through in a short time, there is still another victory to be won—that over custom, the victory over ourselves, over the inferiority complex which most women have. I plead with you tonight to win that final victory. Let us build an organization that can induce not only our own nation, but this hemisphere, the world, to stand for justice to women. Let's send Gail Laughlin to Congress — a woman to the White House. Let us remember that the best ruler England ever had was a queen!

(*Concluded in next issue*)

Conflict and Victory

By James Brown Scott,
President of the American Institute of International Law, President of the American Society of International Law, Former President of the Institut de Droit International

(*This is the second and final instalment of Dr. Scott's article on the Montevideo Conference; the first appeared in last week's issue of Equal Rights.*)

DURING our Civil War, which equalized the legal status of blacks and whites, admirers of General McClellan urged President Lincoln to reinstate him in the command of the Army, on the ground that he was a most capable engineer. Listening intently, as was his wont, our great and humanitarian President is reported to have said in effect that the General was no doubt an excellent engineer, but that he must have practiced on a stationary engine. We men are marking time, and practising, as it were, on a stationary engine. The women, if the men do not, will push along the treaty-making engine.

Now what did the women want at Montevideo? Not by treaty to reverse the natural order of things, so that men instead of women should hereafter give birth to children. No. The women wanted, by a single Pan American treaty—which is a statute—to remove the prefix from "unequal," so that the status of women with men in their civil and political relations might henceforth be equal; for a single Pan American treaty ratified by the twenty-one American States would abrogate at one and the same time every inconsistent statute on the question in every American Republic.

It did not injure the public careers of our Franklin and our Lincoln to have a saving sense of humor.

* * *

The proposals laid by Miss Stevens before the Seventh Conference in behalf of the Inter American Commission of Women were, as already stated, two in number: first, a treaty in the matter of nationality of women; second, the adoption of equal civil and political rights for men and women in the law and practice of the American Republics. Another proposal, not made by Miss Stevens, was, as already stated, the recommendation that the Inter American Commission of Women be continued, in order to carry on its investigations in matters relating to the civil and political rights of women, and to act in an advisory capacity to the Americas. Each of these matters was referred to the Third Commission of the Conference, in which twenty of the twenty-one American Republics were represented. The proposals were referred to a sub-committee and the first and third were favorably reported to the full Commission. They were debated in the Commission and adopted after much discussion, and a bitter and irritating debate. The Delegation of the United States was represented in this Commission by the Honorable Alexander W. Weddell, Ambassador of the United States to Argentina. He opposed each of these proposals in behalf of the Delegation of the United States, acting, it is said, in pursuance of instructions from Washington.

THE Department of State was informed, it is said, that only five or six of the American Republics were favorable to the equal nationality Convention. As a matter of fact, however, the draft Convention was unanimously approved in the subcommittee, and later, by the well-nigh unanimous vote of the Commission. The statement of the American Delegation was therefore proved to be incorrect, but because of this misstatement the President of the United States was said to be unwilling to instruct the American Delegation to approve and to sign the Convention. Telegrams requesting the President to instruct the American Delegation to approve and to sign were sent by representatives of many women's organizations in the United States, both to the President and to the American Delegation at Montevideo; also, telegrams from leading Senators, members of Congress and other personalities, both to the President and to the American Delegation.

NOW, the President of the United States formulates the policy of the United States; if it is to be put in the form of a treaty, the treaty is a proposal on his part, to be approved or disapproved by the Senate of the United States. The President, the busiest of men, cannot himself investigate complicated conditions. He must rely upon the investigations of others, and upon the facts found by them form his conclusions. He should have persons at his disposal who could aid him in this difficult and important task, and, in the matter of international conferences, persons or delegates who are familiar with the subjects with which they are charged, who submit information to the President which is accurate and, therefore, trustworthy, lest otherwise the President of the United States may unwittingly adopt a policy contrary to the best interests of the United States, as well as of the countries with which the United States might enter into relations. When it appeared to the President that the large majority of the delegations representing the American Republics were in favor of the Nationality Convention, and that there was a widespread opinion in favor of the approval and signature of the proposed Convention by various large groups in the United States, with the assurance of members of the Senate that that body would approve the treaty, if signed, and that the House of Representatives would join with the Senate in enacting the legislation necessary to carry the treaty into effect, the President of the United States instructed the American Delegation to sign.

IT is fortunate, indeed, that we have an open-minded President, and that he is willing to correct instructions based upon misapprehension.

Ambassador Weddell had given as a reason why the American Delegation should not approve the Nationality Treaty, the fact that "a special interdepartmental committee of my Government is so codifying the laws as to remove the last vestiges of discrimination." To the undiplomatic mind it would seem that this should be a reason for the United States to sign the Nationality Treaty, for by so doing would not the United States "remove the last vestiges of discrimination," and thereby require both houses of Congress to enact the necessary legislation to render the treaty effective? Hard cases make hard law — a distinguished judge was wont to say — and the case of the American Delegation in this respect was not merely hard, but bad. We who believe in Equal Rights for all human beings, whether black, white, yellow or brown, are deeply grateful to the President of the United States for his open-mindedness. The Nationality Convention is important in itself, but it is vastly more important as the first great step toward equality by the Western World, for, by its adoption, it consecrates to equality the continent already conceived in liberty.

The second matter was a recommendation concerning Equal Rights. The proposal of the Inter American Commission was a treaty which should incorporate in its provisions equality in civil and political relationships, without discrimination of sex.

The Conference preferred making a recommendation to the respective Governments to take measures to abolish discrimination in political and civil relationships of men and women, instead of adopting the treaty of three lines approved on two occasions by the American Institute of International Law. However, the American Delegation was not only opposed to the treaty; it was also opposed to the recommendation—although it did not involve an obligation on the part of the States—on the ground that these matters could best be taken care of by the Republics themselves. Ambassador Weddell stated:

> "In the matter of Equal Rights, it is the belief of the great majority of women as well as of men in the United States that these survivals of an earlier law, now known to be wholly unsuited to modern conditions in the home, in employment, or in social intercourse, can generally [better] be dealt with by the State than by the Federal Government and treated, question by question, so that the remedy being suited to the evil may be both more appropriate and adequate."

And he continued:

> "Fully to readjust to modern needs relationships that were 'out of joint,' as one may say, is a highly responsible undertaking to be accomplished with reference to other occasions for change as well as that of relative inequality. For these reasons the well-nigh unanimous view of organized women in the United States agrees with the attitude of my Government as indicated."

THE fact that the recommendation in question was adopted by a unanimous vote, the United States abstaining, would seem to indicate that the American Delegation was also misinformed in this matter, as in the question of nationality, although Ambassador Weddell stated that "the delegation from the United States is sincerely desirous that the attitude of their Government and the situation existing in the United States shall not be misunderstood."

In reply to the Ambassador's contention—in opposing the draft treaty for equal civil and political rights—that conditions differ in the various countries and that, therefore, the matter should be regulated by local laws, it may be said that the very purpose of treaties is to correct inequalities of all kinds in the laws and practice of different States in behalf of the contracting parties; in short, the substitution of equality for inequality in the laws of the contracting parties has been, and still is, a principal, if not the chief motive of treaty-making.

In the matter of continuing the Inter American Commission of Women, Ambassador Weddell abounded in "deep gratitude to the Inter American Commission of Women for their report," but "I remain"—he said—"under the necessity of informing this Commission that my Government desires to dissociate itself in the future from the work of the Inter American Commission of Women, and intends to continue its studies in this field through branches of the Government charged with responsibility in these matters."

If the American Delegation had a sense of "deep gratitude" to the Inter American Commission of Women for its report, it seems strange that the United States refused to have further connection with it in the future, preferring "to continue its studies in this field through branches of the Government charged with responsibility in these matters."

Now, those of us who have been in governmental service know that branches of the Government charged with responsibility in these matters are not creative, but that they adopt the views of their superiors as a matter of course; whereas, the Inter American Commission, official in its organization, but not subject in its activities to the American Republics, is free to conduct its investigations according to its judgment, and to make recommendations without the interference of the American Republics and without being obliged to accept their recommendations. What we need in these matters is a free report from a free Commission, not a biased report from a governmental commission.

Our Benjamin Franklin, admittedly somewhat versed in matters diplomatic, would have called this refusal to cooperate a *faux pas,* in the language of the old diplomacy—a diplomacy which, however, secured by treaty the Independence of these United States; indeed, did he not condemn in advance the future action or, rather, inaction of his country? Criticizing his recalcitrant brethren of the Federal Convention in Philadelphia, which gave us the first of the *Magna Cartas* of a new world, he indulged in a recollection and an anecdote. The recollection, a masterpiece of worldly wisdom—

> "I confess that there are several parts of this constitution which I do not at present approve, but I am not sure I shall never approve them: For having lived long, I have experienced many instances of being obliged by better information, or fuller consideration, to change opinions even on important subjects, which I once thought right, but found to be otherwise. . . . . Most men, indeed, as well as most sects in Religion, think themselves in possession of all truth, and that wherever others differ from them it is so far error. . . . ."

The anecdote, a demonstration—

> "But though many private persons think almost as highly of their own infallibility as of that of their sect, few express it so naturally as a certain french lady, who in a dispute with her sister said, 'I don't know how it happens, Sister, but I meet with no body but myself, that's always in the right. *Il n'y a que moi qui a toujours raison.*'"

* * *

THE American Republics have looked in the past to the leadership of the United States, but in these three great questions there was no leadership; there was an abdication of leadership. The Delegation did not vote against the Nationality Treaty—it abstained, a purely negative action. It was subsequently instructed to sign. The American Delegation did not vote for the recommendation—it abstained; a purely negative action. The Delegation did not vote against the continuance of the Inter American Commission; it praised it, and yet it abstained from voting—also a purely negative action. Yet these questions were, I venture to say, notwithstanding statements to the contrary by my betters, the most important before the Conference. They concern one-half of the human race; indeed, the whole race, for what affects one affects the other half. The laws of the world have heretofore always been man-made, and although women are here and there in

the seats of the mighty, they are always in the minority, and their influence is but trifling in those assemblies where votes, not arguments, count. Naturally, men possessed of superior rights cannot, as a rule, put themselves in the place of the women who, in the course of untold centuries, have been looked down upon by men as inferiors. And only the outstanding and fearless women of a community have dared to question the claim of the men to superior position under the law, to judge them by their action or judge them by their conduct; to judge them by their character or their capacity, or by the wisdom, or rather, the lack of wisdom with which they have conducted the affairs of their respective countries and brought their countries to the brink of ruin, as evidenced by the conduct of the so-called statesmen in charge of affairs at the outbreak of the World War.

WITHOUT arguing the matter further, what the women want, and what they will get, is "the separate and equal station to which the laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them"—an equal right in the making of the laws to which they are to be subject. Government cannot be by consent if one-half of the population of all of the civilized countries of the world is not authorized to take an equal part in their making.

Economic questions are of great importance. A lowering of tariff walls so high that the birds can hardly fly over them is, indeed, an important matter; but, after all, they are material matters, and the spiritual things of life are the only things that matter; and while we are not likely to be oblivious to our material comforts, we dare not, if we wish to contribute to the civilization of the future, close our eyes to the things of the spirit. For is it not written, indeed three times written, in Deuteronomy and in the Gospels of St. Mark and of St. Luke, that "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God"? We are experiencing what is called a New Deal in the United States, and we hear on all sides that Government should be, not by the 2 per cent., nor by the 98 per cent., to which I add in my own behalf, but by the 100 per cent. without discrimination of sex, race, or nationality within the broad bounds of these United States.

WE have a rule of law governing international relations, and a rule of law governing individuals in their relations with one another. The first has been, and still is Machiavellian and material, success being the standard. The second, for the conduct of individuals, is a rule of social conduct, to which morality is not a stranger. We need, and we must have in our international relations, as well as in the relations of individuals one and the same standard of right and wrong, and we cannot have a single standard of right and wrong, nor can we hope for equal laws and their equal application unless the source of power springs from equality. Therefore, the new international law, which the world so greatly needs, should be a law not made by men alone, nor by women alone; but by intelligent men and intelligent women; not in the interest of one or the other, but of both; and until the women, as well as the men, have equal civil and political rights, we cannot hope to have equal laws, equal rights and equal duties for men and women, nor equal rights and equal duties for the States in their relations with one another. For, after all, the State is nothing but the sum total of its peoples, organized for a social, a political, and a moral purpose, and the policy of the States with one another should be the policy of individuals with each other. Four of the American States—Uruguay, Paraguay, Ecuador and Cuba—recognized this when they signed the treaty for equality in civil and political relations of men and women without the discrimination of sex. This action on their part is the beginning of the newer Law of Nations, to be based on equal rights, equal duties and an equal application of both. The Inter American Commission of Women is responsible for this action, and by its insistence upon equal rights and equal duties without reference to sex, and by rallying the overwhelming support of the Conference, it has initiated a movement which will encircle the world.

WHEN Latimer and Ridley were burned at the stake in Mary Tudor's reign, Latimer said, "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man; we shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England as (I trust) shall never be put out."

The American women at Montevideo have started a fire, and we pray and hope and believe that, by God's grace, it will never be extinguished!

* * *

OUR great Presidents are our emancipators. President Washington emancipated the colonies from the tyranny of a British monarch, and President Jefferson emancipated us from the tyranny of ignorance; President Lincoln emancipated the black men and the black women of our country held in slavery; and President Wilson, through the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, secured to women the equal exercise, with their fellow-countrymen, of the inestimable right of suffrage. May President Roosevelt follow the example of his Democratic predecessor and, through another amendment to the Constitution, secure to American men and women equality in all their human relationships. Should this be done—and it must be done—then the United States of America will again assume the moral leadership which they have lost at Montevideo, and notwithstanding economic depression which, after all, is but a material thing—our greatest export in the future, as in the past, will be the American ideal.

In the capital city of Weimar there is a monument to the memory of Goethe and Schiller, two noble statues in marble of two noble men: the one looking straight forward; the other with head in the air; the hand of each touching a wreath of laurel.

I would like to think that some day there will be in the Capital City of Washington a monument in bronze to Alice Paul and Doris Stevens—the one looking straight forward, the other with head in the air, and the hand of each upon a laurel wreath, the only adequate award befitting the benefactors of the human race.

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